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FARM CONDITIONS, PARTY ACTIVITIES IN BALTIC COUNTRIESLe Populaire de Paris
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The new economic policy decreed by the Malenkov government is being zealously implemented in the Baltic countries. For instance, in Latvia the Central Committee of the Communist Party has decided that the number of milch cows must reach 560,000 by the end of 1954. The kolkhoz farmers own 60 percent of the cows outright, while the remaining 40 percent are owned by the kolkhozes and the sovkhazes. Latvia now has 1,153 kolkhozes and 107 tractor stations.

The situation of the kolkhoz farmers in the Baltic countries has improved as a result of lower farm taxes and increased prices paid by the government for their products. However, these prices are still very low compared with the retail prices prevailing in state stores. For example, the farmers are paid 1.5 rubles per kilogram for meat, 9 rubles for butter, and .55 ruble for milk, while the retail prices of these commodities are 12.55, 26.20, and 2.90 rubles, respectively.

Meanwhile Communist mass agitation and party propaganda have been intensified. During the past year 97,000 Communists and nonparty intellectuals were indoctrinated in Latvia in 4,563 political schools and study clubs, and 60 rayon schools and evening university courses. Party recruiting methods have not changed under the Malenkov regime, but the Communist parties of the three Baltic countries are still relatively small, as follows:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Membership</u>	<u>Percentage of Population</u>
Latvia	50,000	2.3
Lithuania	36,000	1.2
Estonia	31,000	2.6

These parties are composed mainly of bureaucrats (80 percent), while the remaining members are workers and peasants. In 1953, peasants constituted only 7 percent of the membership of the party in Latvia.

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